



Action funded by
the European Union

EU4Environment

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine

Launch of the EU4Environment in Armenia

29 April 2019, Erevan, Armenia

Brief summary of the meeting

Action implemented by:



Launch of the EU4Environment in Armenia

29 April 2019, Erevan, Armenia

Brief summary of the meeting

Background

The “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment) Action aims to help the six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, to preserve their natural capital and increase people's environmental well-being, by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts.

The Action will run over four years as of January 2019. It is implemented by five international organisations: OECD, UN Environment, UNECE, UNIDO, and the World Bank based on a budget of around EUR 20 million provided by the European Union and co-financing from other sources.

In March and April 2019, national meetings to officially launch of the EU4Environment were held in six EaP countries with the aim to:

- present the context, objectives and the main elements of the EU4Environment,
- discuss national priorities for implementation the six EaP countries and
- identifying synergies with ongoing relevant activities.

Meeting in Yerevan

Participants

The official launch the EU4Environment Initiative in Armenia took place on 29 April in Yerevan. The meeting gathered about 50 participants from a broad range of government agencies (economy, environment, agriculture, industry, territorial development, transport, energy), NGOs and international partners. The meeting was opened by:

- Mr. E. Grigoryan, Minister of Nature Protection,
- Ms. M. Adamyan, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Investment, and
- Mr. P. Świtalski, Ambassador of the EU to Armenia.

The EU4Environment project team was represented by OECD, UNIDO and the World Bank.

The meeting was covered well by the Armenian media.

Results of the meetings

The launch meeting in Yerevan achieved its main objectives. The lively discussion helped to learn about the recent initiatives to “green the economy” in Armenia following an important change of the political regime last year.¹

The Armenian side expressed interest in most themes included in the Description of the Action. The Armenian side put strong emphasis on supporting the new government policies and priorities; asked to provide a targeted practical support; build on the work done previously; use and build the local capacity and ensure co-ordination between key government agencies. It was agreed that a detailed list of priority activities would be submitted to OECD by the two Ministries by 20 May.

During the bilateral meeting with the Ms. I. Ghaplanyan, First Deputy Minister of Nature Protection the EU4Environment team advanced the discussion about the institutional arrangements for the Project implementation, including the identification of the National Focal Points from both Ministries, inter-ministerial co-ordination, local project co-ordination and support, as well as the Project visibility and communications.

Follow up

The follow up of the meeting will include extensive exchange with the Armenian partners about the detailed list of priority activities and the arrangements for in-country project support.

A draft work plan for Armenia, as for all other EaP countries, will be presented at the meeting of the EU EaP Panel of Environment and Climate Change (27-28 May, Vienna). The final adoption of the work plans is planned at first meeting of the EU4Environment Regional Assembly (27-28 June, Brussels).

¹ On 27 April, Armenia celebrated the Citizen Day - first anniversary of the 2018 peaceful revolution which involved a series of anti-government protests from April to May 2018 staged by various political and civil groups which led to ousting the most powerful figure in the government of the Armenia and establishing a very progressive and pro-European government.

Annex: Priority issues raised during the discussions on specific Results of the EU4Environment

1. Green Decision Making

- Green economy
 - Armenia's government places high importance on the environment and the Ministry of Nature Protection has proven resilient to re-structuring/consolidation with other bodies.
 - The Ministry of Nature Protection will be renamed the Ministry of Environment in 2019 to recognise its wider mandate in environmental management.
 - The inter-ministerial coordination body could draw on experiences of the existing climate council, UNIDO-initiated working groups and will need to also work closely with the Prime Minister's office.
 - By June 2019 Armenia will have finalised its EU partnership agreement action plan, with various environment and climate elements which we can use to guide our interventions. Good pre-conditions for climate/environmental action exist.
 - There is need/interest in developing Green Economy indicators and thereby enabling regular reporting.
 - Need to involve Ministry of Economy and existing investment promotion programmes in development of investment priorities/plans.
- SEA/EIA
 - National framework on SEA developed, and prioritisation is done. Proposals for capacity building activities already submitted to the Ministry of Environment, however can be combined or new proposals made.
 - Importance of SEA at the local level and high recognition of EaP GREEN work done;
 - Need to build interagency co-operation and human capacity through pilots and in line Ministries.
 - Support is needed for analysis of cost-effectiveness of EIAs, lessons learned/experience from other countries.
- Awareness and education:
 - Need to learn from Western nations to define and select cost-effective processes.
 - Capacity and awareness also need to be built among community administrators, not just civil servants.
 - UNDP is developing curricula for civil servants, but these courses remain non-mandatory.

- Low public awareness remains. Ministry of Science and Education could help to reach out to media and upscale in the impact on awareness raising work. Ministry of Environment remains the focal point for this work.

2. Circular Economy and New Growth Opportunities

- SMEs
 - Government is happy to continue supporting and scaling up RECP/green enterprise clubs.
 - Publication on green financing has all the key problems/barrier identified. Government is faced with the challenge of helping businesses overcome barriers to RECP.
 - Strategy on cleaner production exists, but implementation very limited.
 - Government needs to identify priority sectors and regions for RECP application;
 - Simplified ISO application procedures should be promoted.
 - Enterprise Europe Network to be used for green economy promotion (SPSD support)
 - EU funding available bilaterally for grants intervention to green agriculture and buildings, possibly SMEs
- Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP):
 - Important to consult SEPA agreement which has SPP (and eco-design) components.
- Waste Management:
 - An Action Plan on municipal solid waste management exists, but needs updating for a more long-term strategy, that includes Green Economy principles (i.e. recycling), and covers all types of waste (including hazardous).
 - A legislative proposal to tax plastic bags and introduce a PET deposit system has been developed.
 - Currently developing a waste governance project with SIDA.
 - The EU also launched a project aiming to re-use plastic waste in the construction sector.
 - Work on waste monitoring would be very welcome also.
 - On EPR, need intentional knowledge sharing to make the case/show implementation steps. E-waste could be a good sector where producers and distributors could be relatively easily involved.
- Eco-innovation:
 - Government is actively trying to engage the private sector (e.g. working with SEPA to develop environmental criteria for products/services).

- Help needed in preparing for the eco-design/EPR component of the SEPA and compliance with Minamata and other Conventions. There are obvious needs stated in this EU agreement.
- Gap analysis for private sector greening already exists. May be a good idea to focus on clear gaps to ensure usefulness of our work.
- Important to link enterprises to funding options for technical solutions.

3. An Environmental Level Playing Field

- Smart regulations and compliance promotion
 - Support to work on “smart” regulations, linked to EU IED, BAT based approaches and integrated permitting.
 - Development of approaches to calculating and applying environmental liability.
- Green finance
 - Review of approaches to calculation of environmental payments and the use of revenue.
 - Assistance to the green bankable projects preparation for financing, esp. for SMEs and in public expenditure.
- Capacity building of environmental institutions and line Ministries.

4. Ecosystems and Livelihoods

- A shared network of protected areas
 - Protected areas and eco-tourism benefits not fully reaped – need help in branding it and integrating the sector into community planning.
 - Support to establishment and management of Emerald sites in close collaboration with national authorities and stakeholders building on previously done work.
- Community action
 - Support to actions of forest conservation and sustainable use by rural communities.
- Timber trade
 - Very hard to tackle illegal logging issue as few other fuel alternatives exist and this alienated rural communities.
 - Support to prevention of illegal loggings and trade; and promotion of legal timber trade
- Strategies for funding
 - Support to development of innovative financing strategies for sustainable management of forests and natural resources

5. Knowledge Sharing and Co-ordination

- Need to work on green growth indicators in co-operation with various agencies with the view to present indicators as part of annual reporting.
- All actions should be clearly linked to government programmes/priorities thus ensuring for targeted, result-oriented processes.
- Interest in practical solutions with concrete deadlines.
- Requesting to take stock of actions already carried out, link to funding opportunities as well as for horizontal coordination/implementation among other EU4 programmes to scale up impact and visibility (e.g. coordinate policy proposals with those that will be submitted by EU4Climate).

List of participants²

Government representatives		
Ministry of Nature Protection	Erik GRIGORYAN Minister	
	Irina GHAPLANYAN First Deputy Minister, EU4Environment National Focal Point	
	Samvel SAHAKYAN Acting Chairman of the Committee of Forest	
	Areg KARAPETYAN Director of the “Hayantar” SNCO	
	Gagik MANUCHARYAN Head of Environment Protection Policy Department	
	Artur PETROSYAN Head of Biodiversity and Forest Policy Department	
	Lusine AVETISYAN Head of Environmental Strategic Programs and Monitoring	
	Ruzanna GRIGORYAN Head of International Cooperation Department	
	Armen VARDANYAN Head of Information and Public Relation Department, Press Secretary to the Minister	
	Vigen ANANYAN Legal Advisor to the Minister, 10YFP focal point	
	Ani KHACHATURYAN	
Ministry of Economic Development and Investments	Mane ADAMYAN Deputy Minister, EU4Environment National Focal Point	

² List of participants may be further completed (subject to verification by national counterparts).

	Artak BAGHDASARYAN Head of Strategic Programs and Monitoring	
	Artur MAYSURYAN Head of Cooperation with the European Union Department	
	Maria POGHOSYAN Head of EU Division	
	Karen GEVORGYAN Deputy Director, SME DNC	
Prime Minister's Office	Aneta BABAYAN Assistant to Vice Prime Minister	
Ministry of Agriculture	Artur BAGHDASARYAN Head of Land Use and Melioration Department	agro@minagro.am
Ministry of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources	Tigran MELQONYAN Head of External Relations Department	minenergy@minenergy.am
Ministry of Finance	Larisa HARUTYUNYAN Head of Cooperation with Foreign Countries and International Organizations Division, Department of International Cooperation	press@minfin.am
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Tigran SAMVELYAN Head of European Department	info@mfa.am
Ministry of Health	Nune BAKUNTS Deputy Director of the Surveillance and prevention of diseases Center	info@moh.am
Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	Arman UDUMYAN Deputy Minister	info@mlsa.am
Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development	Lilia SHUSHANYAN Deputy Minister	mta@mta.gov.am
Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technologies	Kristine BEGLARYAN Head of Foreign Relations and Programmes Department	info@mtcit.am

Statistical Committee	Nelli BAGHDASARYAN Council Member	info@armstat.am
Public Services Regulatory Commission	Mushegh KOSHETSYAN Commission Member	psrcinfo@psrc.am
RA National Assembly	Hermine POGHOSYAN Expert	
	Mary GALSTYAN Deputy of the National Assembly	
Inspectorate for Nature Protection and Mineral Resources	Igor SARGSYAN Acting Head of the Inspectorate for Nature Protection and Mineral Resources	
Yerevan Municipality	Khachik HAKOBYAN Head of Environment Department	
Stakeholders Civil society / Academic community / Experts / IOs		
ADB	Shane ROSENTHAL Country Director, ADB	
American University of Armenia	Alen AMIRKHANYAN	
Association "For Sustainable Human Development"	Karine DANIELYAN President	
Center for Ecological Noosphere Studies	Marieta AVETISYAN	
Expert	Dshkhuhi SAHAKYAN RECP Expert	
Expert	Tigran SEKOYAN RECP Expert	
Expert	Anahit SIMONYAN UNIDO representative in Yerevan	

Expert	Elyanora GRIGORYAN Espoo Convention Focal Point	
FAO	Gayane NASOYAN Assistant Representative, Food and Agriculture Organization	
GIZ	Anne KEMPA Country Director, GIZ Office Armenia	
Institute of Botany	G. FAGUASH	
"Khazer" Ecological NGO	Ms Amalya HAMBARDZUMYAN NGO president	Khazer@nature.am
KfW	Zara CHATINYAN Local Representative, KfW Office in Armenia	
R2E2	Karen ASATRYAN Director	
Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus)	Nune HARUTYUNYAN Director	
Scientific Center of Zoology and Hydroecology	Hasmik KHACHATRYAN	
State Agrarian Academy of Armenia	Vardan URUTYAN Rector	
UN	Shombi SHARP UN Resident Coordinator	
UNDP	Dmitri MARIYASIN Resident Representative of the UNDP in Armenia	
	Armen MORTIROSYAN	
	Diana HARUTYUNYAN UNDP Climate change Program Coordinator	

	Natalis OLOFINSKAYA	
USAID	Deborah GRIESER Mission Director, USAID	
European Commission and EU Delegation to Armenia		
European Union Delegation to the Republic of Armenia	Ambassador Piotr ŚWITALSKI Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia	
	Andrea BAGGIOLI	+374 10 546494 andrea.baggioli@eeas.europa.eu
	Gonzalo SERRANO DE LA ROSA	+374 10 546494 gonzalo.serrano-de-la-rosa@eeas.europa.eu
Implementing Partners		
OECD	Krzysztof MICHALAK Senior Action Co-ordinator	+33 145 24 92 02 krzysztof.michalak@oecd.org
UN Environment	Rie TSUTSUMI Project coordinator	rie.tsutsumi@un.org
	Alex LESHCHYNSKY UN Environment, Technical officer, eco-innovations	alex.leshchynskyy@un.org
UNIDO	Tatiana CHERNYAVSKAYA International Project Coordinator	t.chernyavskaya@unido.org
World Bank Office in Armenia	Hmayak AVAGYAN Environmental specialist	havagyan@worldbank.org